

Disagreement Over Dessert

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Disagreement Over Dessert

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Summary

“Think of it this way, Mako,” she says, noting her scowl. “You already had a pretty generous helping. Isn’t that enough?”

“I want-” Mako thrusts out her weapons, her determination shining. “-to lick the spoons.”

Ryuko tries to bake a cake. The key word is *tries*.

Notes

day 17: weapons

“Don’t you usually bite into ‘em whole?”

Ryuko smirks, and behind closed lips, hums her amusement. The carving knife she’s using must look peculiar to Mako. She’s in their kitchenette, the rinds of the lemon scattered on the counter. The cutting board has slivers of splinters rising from the imprints, filling quickly with juice that had seeped from the fresh, bare lemon she’d cut into thinly sliced halves.

“Yeah, but the recipe calls for them to be a topping. Y’know, adds a nice sour tang to the sweetness,” she says, flicking her index finger at the cookbook.

Mako snatches it off the windowsill. She buries her face between the pages before gasping so sharply that, had Ryuko not lived with her for years, might have been worrisome. “You’re baking a cake! Where’s the batter? I wanna lick the spoon!”

“Calm down. I just finished step one, which is, you know-” Ryuko flips the knife, the glint catching on the ceiling lights, before snatching it with practiced ease. “-get the skin off the lemon.”

“But you’ll let me lick the spoon when it’s time, riiight?”

She bats her eyelashes and laces her fingers by her cheek. Standing on her tiptoes, Mako pulls her lips so far into her cheeks that her eyes squint. Ryuko, nonplussed, sets her finger on Mako’s nose and pushes her down, just like she often had to do when old, mangy Guts begged for extra helpings of meatloaf.

“Yeah, yeah. I’ll save you some,” she says, and Mako squeals, sealing their promise with a puckered kiss on Ryuko’s cheek.

She gathers the necessary ingredients out of the cupboards and fridge, Mako following her every move. Setting her mixing bowl next to the cutting board, she gently nudges Mako aside when she tries worming her way over to snatch the can of vanilla frosting. She splits her attention between the recipe and her work, occasionally hoisting Mako by her collar like a mischievous kitten when she attempts to sneak her fingers into the mixture that can hardly be considered batter.

Ryuko whisks the flour and baking powder. She beats together butter and sugar until they are fluffy. She cracks the eggs against the stove, dumping them in with only a couple of stray shells slipping into the mixture when she combines everything. Then, spilling milk and lemon juice into it, she snatches her whisk and stirs with such fervency that globs of batter splatter onto her shirt and in the air. Out of the corner of her eye, Mako licks her face clean and lunges to snatch any flying batter like a chameleon.

She sighs, satisfied with her work. “Now, to put it in the-”

Ryuko pauses. She grips the bottom of her bowl, eyes narrowing. She arches her back and squares her shoulders. The thoroughly creamy and thick batter is just waiting to be deposited onto the greased tray.

But standing in front of the oven, the door cracked ajar to allow warm rays to escape, is Mako. She brandishes a long wooden spoon like a blade. Slowly, she taps the counter and secures her fingers around a second, smaller metal spoon. And hunching forward, her nostrils flaring, Mako licks her lips.

“Ryuko-chan,” she states, as grave as a woman ready to die for her cause, “don’t forget your promise.”

Her gaze briefly slips to the batter. She supposes it’s partially her fault for being too enthusiastic with her stirring. The batter is less than she anticipated, and the actual cake will be smaller. With the amount Mako already gobbled, Ryuko had hoped it would have sufficed, but as Mako glares, Ryuko quickly decides on a peace offering.

“Think of it this way, Mako,” she says, noting her scowl. “You already had a pretty generous helping. Isn’t that enough?”

“I want-” Mako thrusts out her weapons, her determination shining. “-to lick the spoons.”

Ryuko speaks out of the corner of her mouth. “Oh, plural, huh?”

“Yeah! Plural! Because the other spoon is for you! We can lick them together while it bakes, so don’t pour it all on the tray.”

Groaning, Ryuko turns the bowl, and the batter slithers to the rim. “As much as I wanna, I was already too hasty. See? Look. There’s not enough for a full cake-”

“-which is better! The batter is the best part!”

Mako jabs her spoons into the bowl, and out streams light golden batter. Ryuko yelps and curls in on herself, pressing the bowl to her chest as Mako stuffs a lavish lump into her mouth. She shivers from head to toe, cooing in delight, and offers Ryuko the metal spoon, which, much to her dismay, contains a second lavish lump.

But the sheer delight in Mako’s expression, her twinkling eyes and tight-lipped smile around her spoon, compel her agreement. Ryuko opens her mouth, and Mako stuffs the spoon inside. She nearly gags, only to hum, the sweet and tart batter melting in her mouth. She pauses, swishing the spoon between her teeth, and swallows, breaking in to a matching grin.

“Damn! I thought baking a cake was the way to go, but the batter tastes better! Let’s have it instead, Mako!”

At Mako’s cheer, they clink their spoons together and have their fill, sharing spoonfuls and laughter in-between bites.

And yet, later, as Ryuko lies in her futon, queasy beyond all belief, she glares at her older sister, whose exasperation is evident in her reprimands.

“Didn’t you know about salmonella? How you shouldn’t consume anything improperly cooked?” she demands, pressing her hand to her brow. “This is embarrassing for a college-aged woman.”

“Hey, I lived with the Mankanshokus for years, and I never got sick! Not even once!”

“As if that matters when your cheeks are green, and I can hear your stomach crying in pain.”

Ryuko groans, burying her face in her pillow as she squirms under the blanket. “Can someone go get me those lemons I chopped? I need the taste outta my mouth,” she moans as Satsuki sighs.

Mako, as right as rain, salutes Ryuko. “Ay-ay, baby!” she calls, and she scampers out of the bedroom, tunelessly singing as she runs.

“How the hell isn’t she sick?” Ryuko huffs, and Satsuki removes the damp, warm cloth from her brow.

“Well, your girlfriend has a stronger stomach,” she suggests, sounding certain. “Let’s leave it at that before your yelling upsets your stomach more.”

As Mako returns with the lemons on a napkin, still carrying her prior jubilation, Ryuko supposes a bout of food poisoning is fine, so long as Mako stays smiling.

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